

7 MAY 1923

LATIVE C

The Council re-assembled at the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at 11 a.m. on Monday the 26th day of March 1923, the hon. Diwan Bahadur Sir P. RAJAGOPALA ACHARIYAR, K.O.S.I., C.I.E., President, presiding.

I

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

[Order made by the President of the Madras Legislative Council under Standing Order No. 15—

(1) Printed copies of the questions and answers to be put and given at a meeting of the Council shall be placed on the Council table an hour before the President takes his seat.

(2) The questions shall be put and answered in the following manner:—

The Secretary shall call the name of each interpellator in alphabetical order, specify the serial numbers of his questions, and make a sufficient pause to allow him or any other member a reasonable opportunity of rising in his place if he is desirous of asking a supplementary question. Supplementary questions must be put immediately after the principal questions to which they relate.]

Executive Engineers in the City.

921 Q.—MR. T. SIVASANKARAM PILLAI: Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Public Works be pleased to state—

(1) if there has been a workshop and stores for the Public Works Department in the city of Madras in charge of an Executive Engineer and if so, for how long;

(2) what has been the annual cost of the workshop and the stores for each of the ten years ending with March 1922;

(3) whether the kind of articles turned out in the workshop cannot be got from any of the engineering firms in the city or elsewhere in the open market at lesser cost;

(4) whether it is a fact that the bulk of the engineering stores is ordered from foreign countries and that the Engineer in charge is entrusted with the work of receiving and distributing the said stores to the several Executive Engineers in the Presidency;

(5) whether there is an officer called the Agent for Government Consignments at the Madras Ports, appointed to take delivery of all foreign stores including the engineering articles;

(6) whether the work of receiving and distributing the engineering articles now being done by the Executive Engineer in charge of the workshop and the stores cannot be left to be done by the said Agent for Government Consignments with additional establishment, if necessary;

(7) whether the number of the Executive Engineers in the Madras City cannot be reduced by one without prejudice; and

(8) whether it is a fact that the Superintending Engineer in charge of the present V Circle has very little work by way of supervision over the workshop and the stores?

A.—(1) The Public Works Department Workshops and Stores, Madras, have been in existence since 1864. They are not in charge of an Executive Engineer but in charge of an officer who is outside the cadre of the Engineer establishment. His designation is General Superintendent, Public Works Department Workshops and Stores.

[26th March 1923]

- (2) The annual charges incurred in the Public Works Department Workshops and in the Public Works Stores are as follows :—

Public Works Workshops.

	RS.		RS.
1912-13	... 45,992	1917-18	... 73,412
1913-14	... 54,492	1918-19	... 82,476
1914-15	... 56,790	1919-20	... 90,579
1915-16	... 62,614	1920-21	... 1,18,839
1916-17	... 71,127	1921-22	... 1,05,856

N.B.—Increased charges are owing to increased orders.

During the war no money was spent on repairs and the increased charges were the result of heavy orders from the Board of Munitions.

Since the war the further increase is partly the result of increase of wages but until last year the orders have remained heavy and repairs to buildings and machinery are overdue. The charges will only fall considerably after these repairs are executed.

- (3) Many articles turned out by the Public Works Workshops could be manufactured by local Engineering firms and could be got in the open market but not at so low a cost.
- (4) In the past most of the stores have been obtained by Home indent, but local indents are freely made now. The General Superintendent prepares Home indents, places local indents and guarantees quality, receives and distributes stores to all Government departments and not only to the 34 Executive Engineers.
- (5) The answer is in the affirmative.
- (6) The answer is in the negative.
- (7) The number of officers in the Madras City has been reduced by one, the Stores and Workshops having been combined into one division under the General Superintendent with effect from 1st April 1922.
- (8) Yes.

The Superintending Engineer, V Circle, however controls the establishment of Shops and Stores.

Report of the Indigenous Drugs Committee.

922 Q.—Sriman BISWANATH DAS Mahasayo: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) the action which the Government have taken or propose to take on the Report of the Indigenous Drugs Committee presided over by Khan Bahadur Usman Sahib, M.L.C.; and

(b) whether they propose to place the said Report on the Editors' table for the use of the public?

A.—(a) The Government have not yet considered the report which has only just been received.

(b) The question is under consideration.